

Hearts are 'Torn' as Israelis Honor Deceased Hostages

The nation of Israel is in mourning. The bodies of four kidnapped hostages from the October 7th massacre made their way from Gaza to Israel Thursday morning.

Today's exchange was widely regarded as the most heart-wrenching yet.

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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reflected the soul of the country, saying Wednesday, "The heart of an entire nation is torn. My heart is torn. Yours too. And the heart of the whole world needs to break, because here, we see who we are dealing with, what we are dealing with: monsters. We grieve, we are in pain, but we are also determined to ensure that something like this does not happen again."

This is the only image I will share from today. This is Israel standing in salute and respect of the innocent hostages killed as they are driven to the institute for examination.

– Cheryl E ██████████ (@CherylWroteIt) February 20, 2025

The International Red Cross brought the bodies from Hamas to the Israel Defense Forces who took them to Israel for forensic identification. It's expected the four bodies include Shiri Bibas and her four-year-old son Ariel, and nine-month-old son Kfir, along with 84-year-old Oded Lifshitz, one of the founders of Kibbutz Nir Oz, from which they were all captured.

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Earlier, in a ceremony attended by thousands of men, women and children, Hamas masked men brought out the caskets. Al Jazeera even interviewed some who claimed to be the kidnappers. Hamas contends that IDF bombs killed the four who were turned over on Thursday, but autopsies will be performed to reveal how they were killed.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog believes these next few days will be “heart-wrenching” for Israelis.

“These are days of a wake-up call—not just for our nation, but for the entire family of nations. In the face of this evil—led by the evil Iranian regime and its proxies, we must stand together, resolutely, firmly, and courageously,” Herzog declared.

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Thousands of Israelis gathered Wednesday at Hostage Square and again on Thursday.

For many, the Bibas family has become the most well-known of the hostages. The video of a terrified mother clutching her babies has become the emblem of the cruelty of Hamas on October 7th and for more than 500 days afterward.

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